

How Narcissists Use Shame As A Weapon & How To Cope, part 1

Narcissists absolutely love using shame as a weapon. Not only does it make them feel superior, but it also takes attention off of the bad behavior of the narcissist while simultaneously discrediting their victim. It also makes a victim easy to control by damaging their self esteem. In fact, shame can actually destroy a person's self esteem. Guilt says that you did something wrong, whereas shame says there is something deeply, irreparably wrong with you for doing whatever it is that you did, & that is what makes shame so dangerous to a person.

There are various ways narcissists use shame to abuse their victims.

Narcissists reinvent the past. They tell stories differently than they actually happened. They either claim to be the reason someone succeeded or twist the story around so the other person looks stupid, like a failure, etc. Since narcissists speak with such certainty & get angry when they aren't believed, this can make a victim doubt their own memories & feel ashamed for something they didn't even do. It also can make other people believe the narcissist. One way to combat this is to write down everything in detail. Having a written record of events can help you when you have doubts. Granted, that may not help other people see you in a better light than the one the narcissist painted you in, but at least it will help you.

They tell embarrassing stories about their victim. Narcissistic parents in particular seem to love this one. They tell stories that the victim would rather people don't know about. My mother often did this with me, telling stories in front of other people of when I was a child & did stupid things. When I said I didn't want her discussing these stories, she would shame me for how I felt every time. She said the same things each time, too. She said I was wrong & shouldn't feel the way I did because the stories were supposedly "cute". It took me a long time to realize that I wasn't wrong- my feelings were just & this was nothing but an attempt on her part to make me feel shame. Don't suffer like I did. The narcissist isn't sharing those stories because they're cute or fun. The narcissist is sharing them for the sole purpose of abusing you! When it happens, stay calm & remember that. Then change the topic of the conversation.

Narcissists love playing the victim. No matter what a narcissist does to a victim, they have the amazing ability to spin the situation so they look like the victim, & the real victim is the abuser. This can create shame in a victim very easily unless the victim is well aware of this game. Don't fall for this! If you actually did something wrong, apologize & make it right if you can. If you didn't do something wrong though, do NOT accept that blame!

No true narcissist can be a Christian at the same time. Narcissism is diametrically opposed to the beliefs of Christianity. However, that doesn't mean a narcissist won't use Christianity to shame victims. Growing up, my mother told me I was going to hell for how badly I treated her yet claimed she was going to Heaven because of being a

good person. Not long ago, a flying monkey said I was a bad Christian for treating my parents as I do & claiming to be a Christian. If you have a good relationship with God, you won't fall for the narcissist's lies. You know where you stand. If you have any doubts though, I urge you to pray once you're away from the narcissist. Never let that person see their words have affected you or they'll use the same tactic repeatedly since it's so effective.

Next time, we'll discuss the various other ways narcissists use shame to abuse their victims.

Part 2

Nasty comments said to a victim followed by statements like, "I was just kidding!" "Can't you take a joke?" "You're so sensitive!" are also designed to make a victim feel ashamed for being righteously angry that they were offended by the narcissist's cruel words. The goal is to make you feel ashamed of yourself for not being smart enough to realize the narcissist was only kidding (which they weren't) or for being offended by their "joke." Don't fall for it. You aren't wrong! If a person was truly joking & learned their comment hurt you, they would apologize for hurting you & they'd be more careful with their words. Narcissists don't do that, so it's obvious they wanted to hurt you with their so called humor.

If you & the narcissist have done similar things, you can guarantee the narcissist has done it better, at least if you listen to her side of the story. Every single thing with narcissists is a pissing contest. Sorry to be crude, but that's the best term I know of to describe this particular situation. If you found a cure for cancer, they would say that they found it first, but didn't want to brag like you're doing! If they can make you feel badly for not being as good or as talented as them, that sows a seed for shame in you. Don't listen to the lies! Or, if the narcissist actually has done something better than you, so what? That doesn't mean you're not talented. It simply means they did ONE thing better than you. Big deal!

Even a narcissist that isn't overly intelligent can make a very intelligent victim feel stupid, & ashamed of being so stupid by talking down to them. Narcissists love to talk in circles & use big words. Often that they don't even know the proper definition of the big words & don't use them properly in context, but that doesn't stop them from using those words if they think it'll make you feel dumb. If you leave a conversation with a narcissist & your head is swimming, it's not because you're stupid. It's because narcissists are masters of talking in circles in an attempt to make you ashamed of being stupid. Remind yourself that you are NOT stupid, but you are dealing with a person who wants to make you feel that way.

Acting as if the narcissist is the adult, the victim the child is very common among narcissistic parents. They're all about keeping their children, children, no matter their child's age. A person who thinks they're immature & not wise like their narcissistic parent is very easy to control. Narcissistic parents may continue using a tone of voice that intimidated their children when they were growing up well into that child's adulthood. They may call victims immature or mock them with phrases like, "You're such a baby/child!" "You're so immature!" "You need to grow up!" An adult who feels immature is ashamed of the fact they are an adult yet acting so childish. When faced with this behavior, remind yourself that you are an adult. Remember your age. Remember the fact you have your own successes. You're a responsible, talented, intelligent, mature adult!

Remember this video if you're faced with these behaviors. You do NOT need to feel shame! No one should put that on you, but narcissists will try to. If they do, never

accept it. Ask God to tell you the truth. Also, look at your situation objectively & you will realize the truth. Write about it in a journal, too, since writing often gives a great deal of clarity that speaking can't. If you realize you do feel shame from years of abuse, it's ok- you can heal from that. As you focus on your healing, the shame will dissipate naturally. Also, I found a helpful tool for dealing with shame. Imagine yourself standing face to face with your narcissistic parent. You're holding a box. In that box is the shame you've been feeling for so long. Imagine yourself handing it to your parent or laying it her feet. Tell your parent, "I'm done carrying this for you. This is your shame. You deal with it." Then walk away. I realize it sounds silly, but this really can be helpful in getting rid of toxic shame.